

City of Muscatine Urban Chicken Pilot Program

Limits: The pilot program can continue through December 31, 2017 at which time the City Council will discuss a plan going forward. City staff will provide quarterly updates to council on the progress of the pilot program. City Council retains the ability to cancel the pilot program at any time and for any reason.

Purpose: This a pilot program to trial urban chicken keeping for the purpose of egg production on property parcels smaller than 2 acres. Residents entering into this program do so with the understanding that the City may at its discretion terminate the pilot program and all expenses are the participants. This program is intended to for domestic production and consumption of eggs. Meat chicken rearing is not allowed under the program. No eggs or chickens from this program shall be sold on a commercial basis.

Enrollment: An initial 25 permits are available to participants on a first come first serve basis after completion of the mandatory 'Chicken Rearing' education class instructed by Iowa State Extension or other class as designated.

Program Rules: The following rules pertain to the pilot program and will govern the keeping of chickens and are designed to prevent nuisances and prevent conditions that are unsanitary or unsafe. No person shall keep chickens unless the following rules are followed:

a. Number: No more than four (4) hens shall be allowed for each single-family dwelling.

b. Setbacks: Coops, cages, and fenced enclosures housing chickens shall be kept at least fifteen (15) feet from property lines. Coops, cages and fenced enclosures shall not be located in the front yard.

c. Enclosures: Coops are structures with solid walls and roof suitable for year round housing of chickens. The coop must be lockable to keep chickens in and predators out. Chicken coops must be stationary.

- 1) Cages are open-air wire enclosures for housing chickens. Chicken cages as sole housing for chickens are not allowed.
- 2) Fenced enclosures also known as chicken runs are outdoor enclosures to restrain the chickens when outside of their coop. Fenced enclosures and chicken runs must comply with all city fencing ordinances.
- 3) Coops, cages, and fenced enclosures shall be secured to prevent accidental release by outside parties.
- 4) Hens shall be provided with a covered, predator-proof coop or cage that is well ventilated and designed to be easily accessed for cleaning. The coop shall allow at least two square feet and two vertical feet per hen. The coop shall be constructed of durable materials with appealing aesthetics. Coop construction and location shall be consistent with accessory building requirements.
- 5) Hens shall have access to clean water at all times.
- 6) Hens shall have access to an outdoor enclosure that is adequately fenced to contain the birds on the property and to prevent predators from access to the birds. Hens shall not be allowed out of these enclosures unless a responsible individual, over 18 years of age, is directly monitoring the hens and able to immediately return the hens to the cage or coop if necessary. Enclosures shall be provided with overhead netting/wire to retain the hens while discouraging predators or hens shall be clipped to prevent flight.

d. Sanitation. The coop and outdoor enclosure must be kept in a sanitary condition and free from offensive odors. The coop and outdoor enclosure must be cleaned on a regular basis to prevent the accumulation of waste. Waste odor should not pass across property lines. No carcass burial is allowed. Accumulation of waste is a violation of the pilot program. Waste must be disposed of in a safe and appropriate manor.

e. Health: If any chicken in the flock is sick or appears to be sick then the entire flock needs to be evaluated and treated by a veterinarian within 24 hours. Precautions should always be taken to wash hands before and after the handling of chickens as well as to properly wash clothing..

e. Slaughtering: There shall be no outdoor slaughtering of chickens.

f. Roosters: It is unlawful for any person to keep roosters.

g. Other fowl: No other fowl, such as ducks and turkeys, are permitted under this program.

Pilot Program Eligibility: Candidates for participation in this program shall meet the following guidelines:

- a) Single Family Residence.
- b) No history of nuisance issues.
- c) No history of animal violations.
- d) Completed the educational class on chicken rearing.
- e) No multi-family or rental properties are eligible for this initial pilot.

Pilot Program Permit: A permit is required to participate in the pilot program. A permit is not automatically approved. The application must be filled out to meet all program requirements to the approval of the Community Development Department. An application for a permit must contain the following items and the applicant agrees to the program requirements:

- a) Provide name, phone number and address of the applicant.
- b) Size and location of subject property.
- c) A description of any coops, cages or outdoor enclosures providing precise dimensions and the precise location of these enclosures in relation to property lines and adjacent properties.
- d) Provide a site plan of the property including location and dimensions of property lines, dwelling, accessory buildings, chicken coop and fencing
- e) Participation in data gathering by City during the pilot program.
- f) Agree to pay an initial registration charge of \$25 with an annual renewal of \$10.
- g) With the permit, the participant will receive four (4) leg bands. All hens must be banded. Band will help City track hens and return any escapees to rightful owners. If new bands are needed, they can be purchased from the Muscatine Community Development Department for \$5 each
- h) Sign the application that they agree to all program conditions, that the application contains information, and if any information is found to be inaccurate, that their application may be disapproved or their permit may be revoked.

Permit Renewal: Permits will be granted on an annual basis. The city may revoke the permit at any time and for any reason. If the city receives complaints regarding the permit holder's keeping of chickens or the city finds that the permit holder has not maintained the chickens, coops, or outdoor enclosures in a clean and sanitary condition, the permit could be immediately revoked.

Enforcement: Participation in this program is a privilege granted by the City of Muscatine. City will respond to complaints of animal welfare and nuisance conditions. Participants acknowledge the following:

1. City has the right to enter outside yard areas to investigate complaints or curb nuisance conditions.
2. City may utilize various means of enforcing program requirements such as warnings and ultimately the removal of the participant from pilot program with requirements that participant removes any chickens from its property and abate nuisance conditions.